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June 25 / 1999

Dr. Jane E. Henney:
Commissioner
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 14-71
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Henney:

Please help us to end the use of antibiotics to promote livestock growth when those antibiotics are used to treat humans. Jeopardizing the effectiveness of antibiotics essential for public health protection is a high price to pay to fatten hogs and poultry.

As you know, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and prominent public health organizations have expressed great concern about the massive use of antibiotics to increase livestock weight in light of the growing evidence of antibiotic resistance. The United States should follow the example of the European Union, which banned adding human-use antibiotics to animal feed last year.

Banning the use of antibiotics as livestock feed additives immediately would be an important step to ensuring that these critical drugs will continue to treat human diseases effectively. Let's hope that antibiotic resistance does not grow into a public health crisis before the United States takes effective action to regulate the unnecessary use of these drugs in animal feeds.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Schmotzer

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